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WEST ELIZABETH - JEFFERSON HILLS - PLEASANT HILLS

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Director of Human Resources
JADE C. FIORE
Supervisor of Special Education/Pupil Personnel

November 12, 2020

Dear Parents,

In the last 24 hours, we have been dealing with several possible COVID-19 cases at the high school. One potential case involves an adult that is in quarantine who is involved with the Fall Play. The other potential cases are associated with the swim team and girls' basketball team. Some of these students who will be required to quarantine are also involved in other activities, such as the marching band. While not all of these potential cases have been proven to be positive cases yet, we know they have at least been exposed.

One case that has been confirmed is unaware of from where they may have contracted the virus. This is concerning because, in every other case we've had in the district, we have been able to trace the transmission to a parent or other adult outside of the district. We also have had a high number of students having to quarantine this week because their parent/guardian has tested positive. **In my discussions with the Health Department this morning, we feel that it is prudent to close the high school tomorrow, Friday, November 13, and have all students attend school synchronously online.** The rationale for doing this is that it will give us time to thoroughly clean the building and allow some of these possible cases time to get their results back and/or get tested so that we avoid someone being exposed unnecessarily. For the time being, the swim team will be shut down for two weeks. The girls' basketball team will be shut down until we are able to obtain more information. We are cancelling all after school indoor activities today and tomorrow as an extra precaution.

To this point, we have been able to manage any cases we have had in the district and have been able to trace their origins. I want parents to know that, in my conversation with the Health Department, we still feel kids need to be in school and that the schools are the safest places for them because of the heightened mitigation. We are being ultra conservative and vigilant with the hopes that our proactive measures will prevent any spread.

As we near the holidays, it is critical that all families remain vigilant and safe. If anyone in the house is experiencing a loss of taste or smell, all children should be kept home until test results are returned. Also, if anyone is traveling to a hotspot over the Thanksgiving break, we are asking them to quarantine for fourteen days after returning home. Our goal is to keep kids in school. If spreading continues to happen in the community and it finds its way into our buildings, we will be forced to go full remote.

Parent Letter

November 11, 2020

Page 2

As I said before, it's going to take a community effort to keep our kids in school and, up until this week, we have been very successful. It's important that we don't panic, but instead regroup and be mindful of mitigation strategies in and outside of school, and continue to be proactive and have a reporting process with fidelity and integrity. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (412) 655-8450 ext 2230 or email me at mghilani@wjhsd.net.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Ghilani". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Dr. Michael Ghilani
Superintendent of Schools
West Jefferson Hills School District